
DE News



April 13, 2001 - Iowa Department of Education - Ted Stilwill, Director

From the Director's desk:

- ***Budget concerns grow***
- ***Teacher funding at risk***

As expected, legislative leaders this week called for dramatic fiscal 02 budget reductions in response to our dwindling state revenues. We now have several indications that our state's financial outlook is very serious.

First, the Republican proposal not only makes \$198 million more in cuts than the Governor, it also amounts to a 1.3% or \$65 million cut from current fiscal 01 spending.

Second, Republicans warn that the \$40 million promised for teacher quality funding is now definitely at risk.

Third, all state departments have been asked to stop all discretionary general fund spending, effective immediately through the remainder of this fiscal year.

Impact on services

We don't know for sure how the DE budget will be impacted, because the Republican proposal lumps many non-department things, such as Regents institutions, into its "education" line item, and no details are provided beyond the overall total.

Nonetheless, we know we cannot continue to provide the same services with less money. The number of state-funded DE employees has declined from 138 to 98 over the past 10 years, and yet this reduced number has taken on increasing responsibilities every year. We have added a comprehensive accreditation process for AEAs, implemented new LEA accountability standards and Comprehensive

School Improvement Planning and reporting. We have implemented a new accreditation process and a totally new management information system for community colleges. We have implemented new state and federal programs to reduce class sizes and to improve school infrastructure.

Reducing our budgets would put us in the position of not being able to fulfill our code-mandated responsibilities.

Community college would have to eliminate some courses or even whole sessions. They would delay filling positions that will open through retirements and resignations, negatively affecting their ability to be competitive with other employers who vie for skilled technical employees. Staff development would suffer, and purchases of materials and supplies would be dramatically reduced.

We are monitoring the situation carefully, and expect to hear more information next week regarding how much and where the cuts will be.

Teacher quality policy is near

Policymakers have made slow progress this week on the teacher quality policy language. Much of their attention has been directed toward the budget, and the redistricting proposal announced yesterday also received its fair share of attention. I expect to get back on track early next week with continued discussions about how to implement the TQ details.

Congratulations

The School Administrators of Iowa recently named these administrators of the year:

Tom Williams, Muscatine, superintendent of the year. Finalists: **Kevin Brummer**, West Hancock and **Dan Smith**, Cedar Falls.

Micky Kingery, Clarksville Elementary/Southeast Elementary, Waverly-Shell Rock, elementary principal of the year. Finalists: **Ying Ying Chen**, College Community Schools and **Richard Bridenstine**, Louisa-Muscatine.

Ron Bryan, Storm Lake, middle level principal of the year. Finalists: **David Griffin**, North Scott and **Jane Brandt**, Union.

Steve Westerberg, Denison, secondary principal of the year. Finalists: **Mike Williams**, Dike-New Hartford and **Mike Dick**, Prairie Valley.

Robert Woodard, Stilwell, West Des Moines, assistant secondary principal of the year. Finalists: **Jerry Hightshoe**, Prairie, Cedar Rapids and **Deborah Menke**, Pleasant Valley.

Greg Reed, Cedar Rapids, central office administrator of the year. Finalists: **Ann Johnson**, Ankeny and **Clyde Evans**, Muscatine.

Arthur Roling, Washington Junior High, Dubuque, arts administrator of the year.

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